



The Give and Take of Holiday Gifts

With the holidays approaching we thought it might be a good idea to remind everybody about the gift rules in two areas: accepting gifts from suppliers and giving gifts to management or those in a position of influence.

When it comes to accepting gifts from suppliers the basic rule is that JPL employees and contractor personnel working at JPL may not accept gifts unless they are advertising or promotional items with a value of \$20 or less; e.g., t-shirts with a supplier's name, coffee mugs with a company logo, etc. Even then we should never solicit gifts from suppliers. Also, we may not accept gifts valued at more than \$50 from a single supplier in a year.

Suppliers will sometimes bring in candy, other goodies, or flowers intended for a JPL work group. While employees should discourage this, the Ethics Office may approve these perishable kinds of gifts if it is impractical to return them and they are enjoyed (consumed) by the group and not an individual employee. The Ethics Office will also ask the supplier not to offer such gifts in the future.



To ensure that JPL's gift and gratuities policies are communicated, JPL Acquisition distributes an annual holiday letter to our entire supplier base each November to avoid any awkward transactions.

Also, we shouldn't offer gifts to our supervisors and managers, and those in a decision-making capacity. This dilemma is often eliminated if the exchange is made in an equitable and open setting, such as a holiday name exchange and the gift exchanges are of approximately the same value as the gifts received by everyone else.

Lastly, if your work group is exchanging gifts, make sure you reach out in the spirit of the holiday season, recognizing the different traditions your coworkers may practice in celebrating the holidays.

If you have any questions about accepting gifts, call the Ethics Office.

An Ode to Our Code



A holiday poem we offer to you,
To remind you that rules govern gift-giving, too.
Whether giving or getting we must think it through
To ensure that our values hold solid and true.

So, as we celebrate our holiday season
Whether gift, meal, or party, remember the reason.
Renewing our contacts strengthens relations and trust
Above all remember, goodwill is a must.

Quality and honesty are keys to relations
No supplier should question our true motivations.
Fair dealings with candor bring value to all
If you have any doubt give Ethics a call.

Be it snacks or candies we carefully partake,
Just give us your invoice and not too much cake.
No soliciting, no implying, no favors repaid
Through good faith and action reputations are made.

Character and integrity are always the test
For all to distinguish the best from the rest.
In business and science we take the high road
It's in all that we do; it's our Honor Code.

These stingy rules make us feel like Scrooge,
But without our observance the price could be huge.
Enjoy the festivities with personal time offset or noted
With careful planning our rates will not be eroded.

Gifts and gratuities can result in the boot,
So what are the rules on holiday loot?
Hooray for promotions of 20 dollars or less!
But anything more you need to confess.

No golf clubs, TVs, laptops, or trips
But cheese logs, fruitcakes, and candy are hits.
For modest exchanges of gifts we say fine!
But things given with strings we must always decline.

Customer or supplier, NASA or university,
The perception of propriety governs our deeds.
While it's human to treat to show that we care
Alas, our "guests" must pay their fair share.

Enjoy the season break with rest and repose
Time with friends and family are precious, one knows.
Your Ethics Office wishes you peace and good cheer
Happy holidays to all and those who are dear.

*The Ethics Office,
Doug, Karen, Lani and Martha*



FY 2005 Ethics Training Achieves Best Results Ever

A total of 5,458 benefit based employees received ethics training during FY 2005, the best result ever achieved for annual ethics training. Only five employees did not take the training, down from 13 the previous year. The five employees were from the 3X organization, which has two-thirds of all benefit based employees. That means that all other Directorates achieved 100%. Lab-wide, 99.9% of all benefit based employees were trained. Fifty-seven percent of employees took the training on-line, and 43% took it live. The Ethics Office appreciates the efforts of all those who helped make this year's training such a great success. We look forward to achieving 100% participation in the year ahead.

Integrating Competing Values for Ethical Results

During ethics training we often discuss scenarios where a decision may be considered unethical even though it saved JPL and the Government money. How could this be? Aren't we supposed to be focused on efficiency—saving the taxpayer's money? The answer lies in how we integrate different, and often conflicting, values. Ethics is, in effect, applied values. It is the values we learn from our parents, teachers, religious leaders, etc. applied to decisions we make every day. In the work place we are asked to apply several different values to the decisions we make, including honesty, fairness, efficiency, integrity, respect, accountability and so on. These values have been explicitly or implicitly established over the years by JPL (employees and management), NASA, Congress, and other stakeholders in JPL's success.

For the most part we believe they are shared we attempt to maximize one value to the possible to maximize the efficiency value (i.e., from a company owned by a JPL employee. But if outside sources are capable of providing the important to our Government stakeholders that achieve a high degree of fairness in the



Efficiency also competes with the accountability audited every year by both Government and costs more to do the audits than the amount recommendations. But since JPL spends more than \$1 billion a year in public funds, it should come as no surprise that many of our stakeholders want to check up on us to make sure we're spending those funds in the right way. In other words, they do audits to hold us accountable, even though the cost of those audits sometimes outweigh the short run dollars-and-cents benefits received from the audits. In trying to understand the business environment in which we work we need to have a broad perspective, recognizing that more than one value might be important. Sometimes these values are in competition with each other. In making decisions it is often necessary to integrate values to achieve an ethical result.

values. A potential problem arises, however, if exclusion of others. For example, it might be faster, better, cheaper) by procuring a product this would appear to violate the fairness value product. Indeed, the fairness value is so they are willing to sacrifice some efficiency to procurement process.

value. Various facets of JPL's operations are Caltech auditors. In many cases it probably saved by implementing the audit

If you have any questions about applying values to the decisions you are called upon to make call one of the ethics advisors at the numbers listed in the upper right hand corner of this page.

Use Your Own Stamp, Not JPL's, for Holiday Mailings

With the holiday season approaching it's appropriate to remind the JPL community not to use the JPL Mail Room to get personal cards and packages stamped for mailing. In past years too many JPL employees have sent their holiday greetings to the Mail Room, sometimes in JPL envelopes, for the application of metered postage. This constitutes an improper use of JPL resources. When the Mail Room receives unstamped personal cards, letters, or packages, they send them to the Ethics Office. We typically meet with the alleged offending party to better understand what happened and why.